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Chapter 23:
Stories of Long Ago

SNOW!
トテ
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トテ
TEE HEE!
TEE HEE HEE!

COME HERE!
GOOD KITTY.
A CAT!
MEOW
I SEE THAT IT LIKES YOU,
PRIN-CESS OF FUTA-KAGO.
YOU SHALL KNOW SOMEDAY.
WHO ARE YOU?

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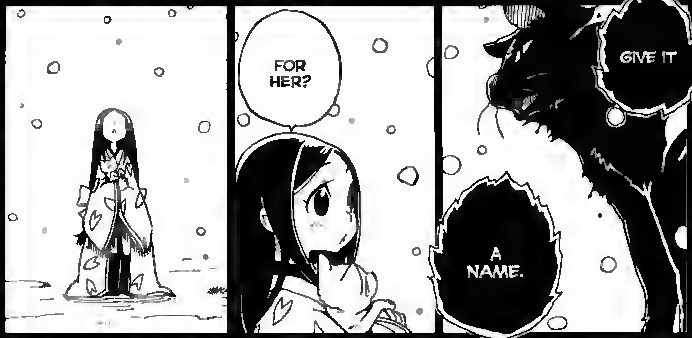

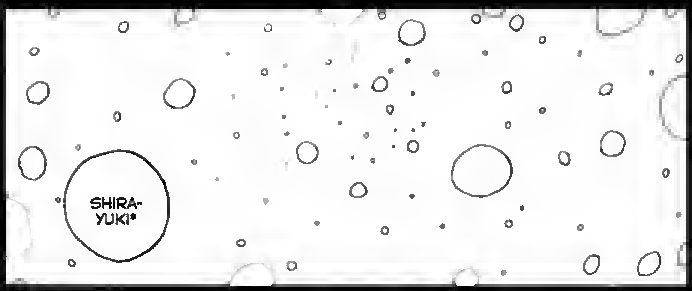

* = "WHITE SNOW"

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IT WOULD BE INHUMANE.
TO ERADICATE THE SPIRIT BEASTS!
IT CANNOT BE, FATHER!
THERE IS NO KNOWING WHAT WILL HAPPEN ...!
THE SPIRIT BEASTS ARE THE GODS OF THE [illegible].
YOU WERE LISTENING?
WATCH WHAT YOU SAY.
YOU ARE DESTINED TO BOND WITH HIM.
NOBUHISA IS MY HEIR.
LET GO OF ME, NOBUHISA!
PRIN-CESS, PLEASE STEP BACK!

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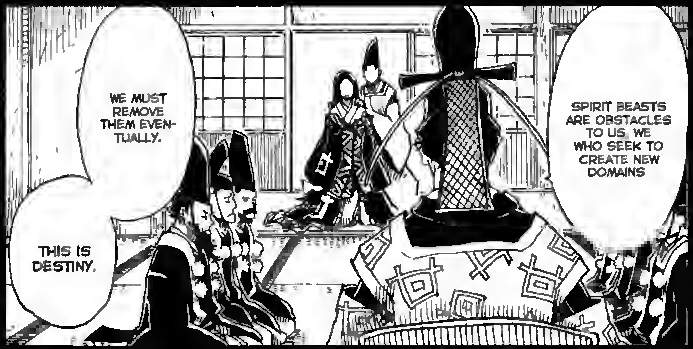

...HOWEVER, ONLY THE MEN HERE CAN PERFORM THAT SPELL....
AND FROM EVERYBODY'S MEMORIES
WITH THIS SPELL WE CAN MAKE ALL SPIRIT BEASTS DISAPPEAR FROM THIS LAND

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LOOKS LIKE IT.
A TRAP?
ズゴ
ゴゴ
ズゴ
!!!
ドドド

WE WILL SEAL YOU WITHIN THE GREAT FUTAKAGO BARRIER!
SPIRIT BEASTS,
SPIRITS, RETURN TO WHERE YOU BELONG!!
NOW!
SOB
SOB
...WE HAD A PREMONITION.
KAEN KNEW THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
I AM SORRY, SHIRAYUKI...
PRINCESS...

I WILL ALWAYS BE AT YOUR SIDE...
PRIN-CESS...
.....
AND...
THE CATS' SPIRIT BEAST...
BECAUSE I LACK POWER...
LONGER THAN ANYONE... CLOSER THAN ANYONE...
BUT
NOR ARE WE THE SAME SPECIES...
WE HAVE NO BLOOD RELATION,
ズズーン
ギュ
THANK YOU, SHIRAYUKI.
SHIRA-YUKI...
ニコ
OUR BOND CAN NEVER BE BROKEN.

SHIRA-YUKI?
ガク ガク
SHIRA-YUKI.
はっ
PRIN-CESS...
RUN...
PRIN-CESS...
UGH...
ガク
P.
KAEN HAD PREPARED IN AD-VANCE.

HE LEFT PART OF HIS POWERS
TO HIS DAUGHTER, SHIRAYUKI
A BLUE FIRE?!
!!
ドン
THAT'S THE PRINCESS'...!!
DON'T FLINCH!
CONCENTRATE ON ACTIVATING THE BARRIER!
HMPH.
ビリビリ
AS EXPECTED OF KAEN-SAMA!
THE TRAP RUINED THE HUMANS' PLOT.
AHH!
ゴゴゴ
A LITTLE MORE!
IF THE GATE WOULD OPEN...
バキ
OUT

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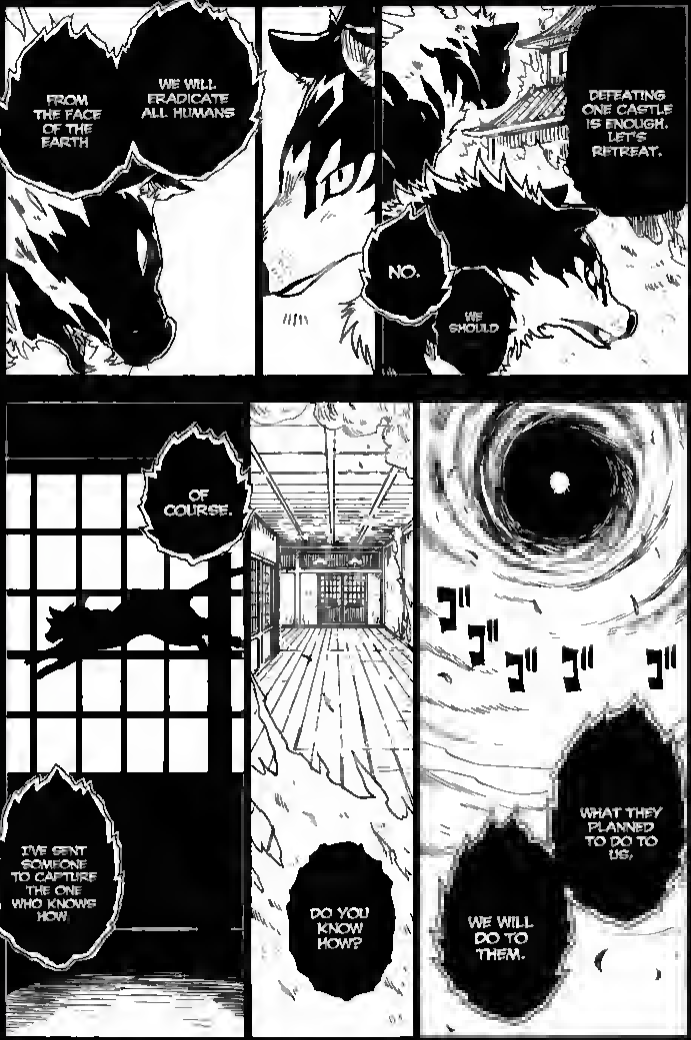
WE WILL ERADICATE ALL HUMANS
FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH
DEFEATING ONE CASTLE IS ENOUGH. LET'S RETREAT.
NO.
WE SHOULD
WHAT THEY PLANNED TO DO TO US.
WE WILL DO TO THEM.
DO YOU KNOW HOW?
OF COURSE.
I'VE SENT SOMEONE TO CAPTURE THE ONE WHO KNOWS HOW.

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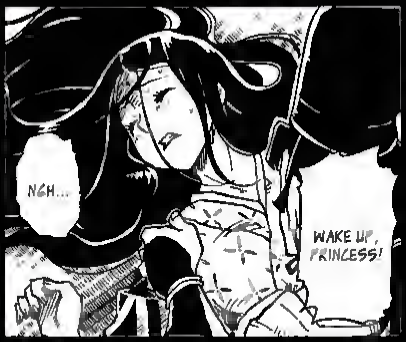

I HAVE RECEIVED THIS FUTAKAGO DAGGER FROM THE LORD.
I ESCA-PED BY A HAIR ...
<GASP>
AND I HAVE ...
MOST OF THE MEN IN THE CASTLE HAVE BEEN KILLED.
THE LORD ...
HE'S BEEN KILLED BY SPIRIT BEASTS.
WHAT?!

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RUN, PRINCESS.
...! WAIT, NOBUHISA!
I WILL USE THIS TO SEND THE SPIRIT BEASTS TO THE UNDERWORLD.
THIS DAGGER IS SAID TO OPEN A GATE AND GRANT ITS OWNER'S WISH...
I HAVE LOVED YOU...
...R SINCE I WAS A CHILD ...
PRINCESS ...
!!?
ARGH ...
NOBUHISA!
IF I...
COME BACK ALIVE, WE SHALL...

オーオーオー
……!!!
ARGH!
ブギッ
ガルルルル
ビクッ
グルル
SHIRA-YUKI...
SHIRA-YUKI...

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STOP, KAEN.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE CONSIDERING WATCHING OVER THEM UNTIL THEY DID
THERE IS A CHANCE... THAT LEAVING THEM ALIVE WILL BECOME BENEFICIAL FOR BOTH US AND THE LAND
NOT ALL HUMANS ARE HARMFUL
HA HA HA!
AS A SPECIES, THEY ARE HARMFUL.
EVEN IF THERE IS VALUE IN AN INDIVIDUAL,
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH.
AND I KNOW THE ANSWER.

YOU INSIST ON DOING THIS?
OF COURSE!
HA HA!!
IF WE LEAVE THEM, THEY WILL HARM US AGAIN.
AND THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO STOP THEM LIKE WE HAVE TODAY.
...THEN...
I MUST STOP YOU.

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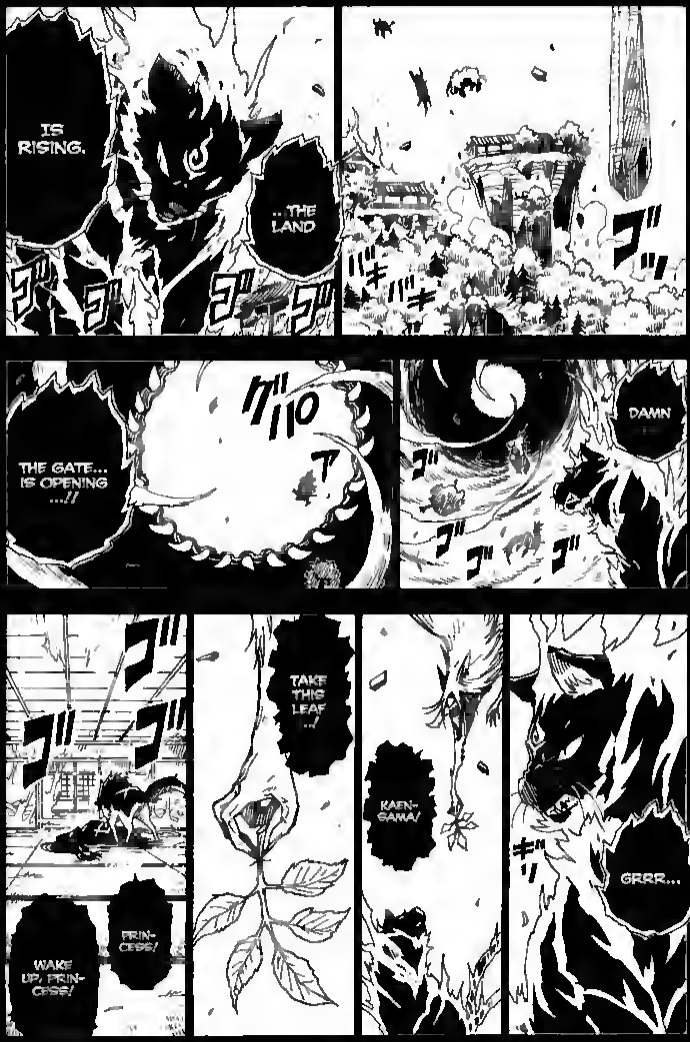

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NOBUHISA'S WISH HAS BEEN HEARD
...YOU CANNOT...
THERE IS NO WAY TO STOP THE SPIRIT BEASTS FROM BEING SENT TO THE UNDERWORLD
YOU ARE... KIBA...
CAN'T I STOP IT?
SINCE I WAS HOLDING THE DAGGER AS WELL, MY WISH SHOULD COME TRUE
...HOW-EVER,
SHOOT
THERE IS ONLY ONE...
BUT THERE IS...
EEK!
AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT CONTRADICT NOBUHISA'S ...
IT SHOULD BE GRANTED ...!

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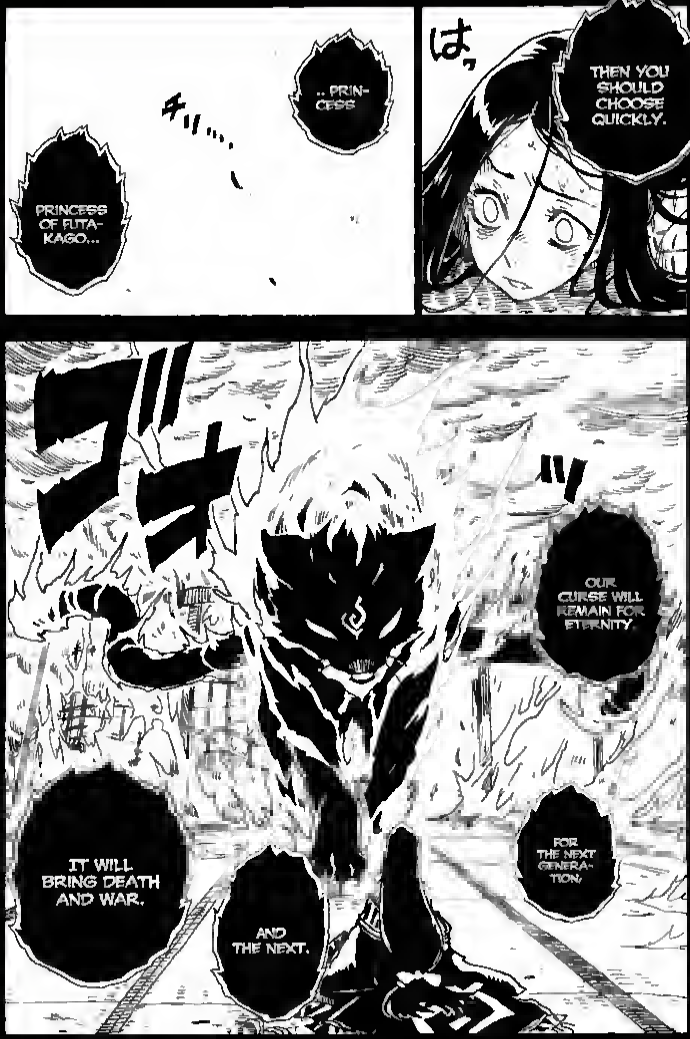

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* = TREE OF TIME

THE LEAF OF THE KOUIN TREE* THAT I RECEIVED FROM TSUKUMO-JIGSHU.
WITH THIS, I WILL...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, KAEN?
HE HE..
TRANSCEND TIME.
!?
TO A TIME WHEN THAT GATE HAS BEEN RENDERED POWERLESS
THAT IS RIGHT
I WILL MOVE TO THIS LAND SEVERAL HUNDREDS OF YEARS IN THE FUTURE.
TIME
TRANS-CEND..

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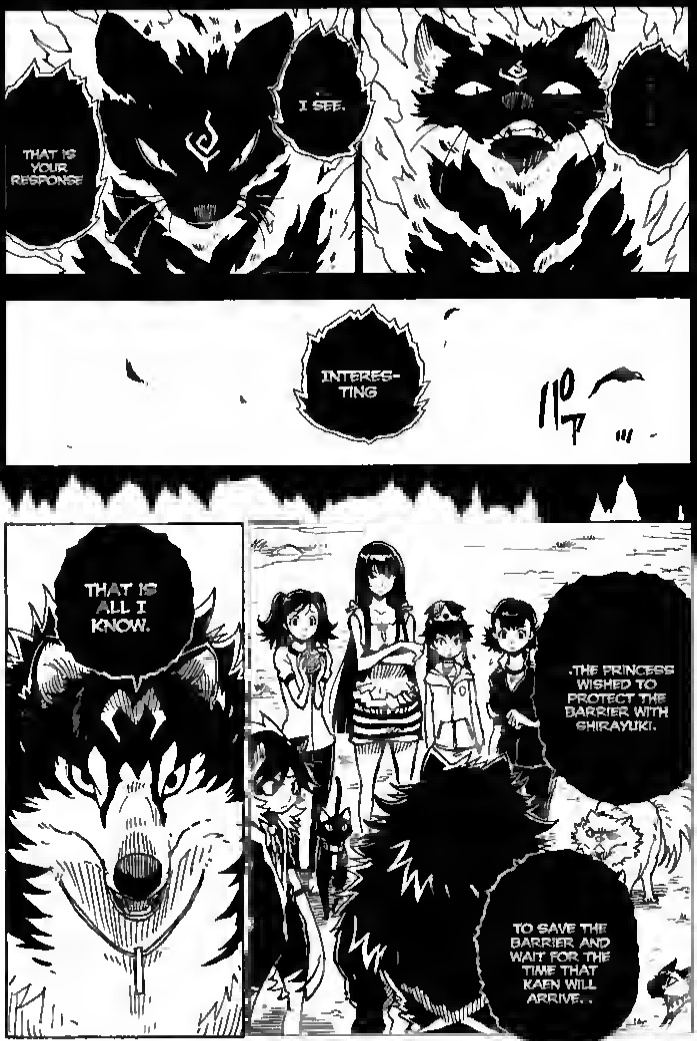
KAEN-SAMA...
AS REVENGE FOR THE SPIRIT BEASTS WHO HAVE BEEN ERASED NOW!
I WILL BURN EVERY HUMAN THERE
PLEASE BURN ALL THE HUMANS...
PLEASE
THAT IS ONE OF MY BEST LEAVES!
THERE IS NOBODY WHO CAN STOP ME
IF THE GATE CLOSES AND THE BARRIER DISAPPEARS THERE WILL NO LONGER BE A LINK TO THE UNDERWORLD...
.....
...NOW WILL THERE BE ANY POWERS...

?
KAEN.
I WILL NOT LET YOU,
IT WAS ORIGINALLY A PART OF MY POWER.
. NOW, RETURN SHIRAYUKI TO ME
SURELY ...
SHIRA-YUKI AND I WILL
!
!
キィィン


THAT IS YOUR RESPONSE
I SEE.
INTERES-TING
THAT IS ALL I KNOW.
.THE PRINCESS WISHED TO PROTECT THE BARRIER WITH SHIRAYUKI.
TO SAVE THE BARRIER AND WAIT FOR THE TIME THAT KAEN WILL ARRIVE. .

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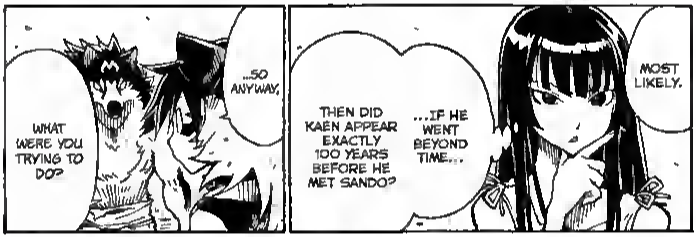
BUT YOU WILL DIE.
WHATEVER YOU SAY...
I FEEL LIKE THE SPIRIT BEASTS ARE THE VICTIMS...
AND WE'RE THE BAD GUYS.
IT'S A REALLY SAD STORY NEVERTHELESS
YEAH, BUT...
IT'S SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT SANDO WROTE.


WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO DO?
...SO ANYWAY,
THEN DID KAEN APPEAR EXACTLY 100 YEARS BEFORE HE MET SANDO?
...IF HE WENT BEYOND TIME...
MOST LIKELY.

I DO WANT ALL OF THE SPIRIT BEASTS TO BE RELEASED.
...BUT DON'T GET ME WRONG.
WHY?
I CAN NEVER DENY SOMETHING THAT I ACCEPTED
IT'S JUST MY NATURE, I GUESS.
...I WANT TO FIGHT WITH THE HUMANS.

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